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# FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin



Intelligence-Led  
Policing in a

# Fusion Center





# Intelligence-Led Policing in a Fusion Center

By DAVID LAMBERT, Ph.D.

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Much writing and discussion have focused on fusion centers as a key element of a homeland security strategy within policing. These centers have proponents in the homeland security and public safety policy-making structures, as well as critics from civil liberties groups and privacy advocates. A great deal of misperception exists on all

sides of the issue regarding the role of fusion centers and intelligence gathering within policing in general.

The concepts of fusion centers, data fusion, and the associated philosophy of intelligence-led policing are abstract terms often misinterpreted and poorly articulated both in and out of law enforcement. While police departments traditionally

have had an intelligence- and information-sharing function, the term *fusion* may be new to some in the profession.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, intelligence-led policing, which has many similarities to community and problem-oriented policing, might prove relatively unfamiliar to some officers.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the incorporation of fusion centers and intelligence-led policing

principles into routine law enforcement functions has been a slow and uneven process. However, doing so can make police agencies more effective.

## DEFINITIONS

*Data fusion* is “the exchange of information from different sources—including law enforcement, public safety, and the private sector—and, with analysis, can result in meaningful and actionable intelligence and information” that can inform both policy and tactical deployment of resources.<sup>3</sup> Building upon classic problem-solving processes, such as the scanning, analysis, response, and assessment (SARA) model, data fusion capitalizes on a wide array of available data to examine issues ranging from terrorism to traditional street

crime. Through data fusion, personnel turn information into knowledge by collecting, processing, analyzing, and disseminating intelligence based upon end users’ needs.

A *fusion center* is a “collaborative effort of two or more agencies that provide resources, expertise, and information to the center with the goal of maximizing their ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity.”<sup>4</sup> Fusion centers can identify potential threats through data analysis and enhance investigations through analytical support (e.g., flow charting and geographic analysis).

Finally, *intelligence-led policing (ILP)* refers to a “collaborative law enforcement approach combining problem-solving policing, information

sharing, and police accountability, with enhanced intelligence operations.”<sup>5</sup> ILP can guide operational policing activities toward high-frequency offenders, locations, or crimes to impact resource allocation decisions.

## ROLE OF FUSION CENTERS

Fusion centers allow for the exchange of information and intelligence among law enforcement and public safety agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. A variety of indicators, such as gang behavior, weapons violations, or metals thefts, span jurisdictions. The growth of fusion centers demonstrates that no one police or public safety organization has all of the information it needs to effectively address crime problems. Progressive fusion centers have access to a wide variety of databases, many of which previously were accessible only by individual federal, state, or local law enforcement organizations. Agency participation in multijurisdictional fusion centers diminishes “stovepipes” of information.

Pooling resources, such as analysts and information systems, can maximize limited assets at a time when all agencies face budget cutbacks. Collaboration across organizations blends subject-matter expertise in areas, such as homeland security, violent crime, and



**“Through data fusion, personnel turn information into knowledge by collecting, processing, analyzing, and disseminating intelligence based upon end users’ needs.”**

*Sergeant Lambert serves in the Massachusetts State Police Commonwealth Fusion Center.*

drug control. It builds trusted relationships across participating agencies, which encourages additional collaboration. Fusion centers foster a culture of information sharing and break down traditional barriers that stand in the way.<sup>6</sup>

Combining data from multiple agencies enables policy makers and police managers to see trends and patterns not as apparent when using a single information source. Employing multiple sources helps present a more credible picture of crime and homeland security issues, as when personnel examine field interview data in conjunction with crime incident reports. Personnel often underreport drug or gang offenses, while field interview cards collected by street officers with intimate knowledge of the community may provide a more valid measure of illegal drug use or gang behavior. Using multiple indicators strengthens the information and results in a more coherent and accurate intelligence product.

## MASSACHUSETTS EXPERIENCE

### Commonwealth Fusion Center

In October 2004, Massachusetts officials opened the Commonwealth Fusion Center (CFC) to focus on terrorism, homeland security, and crime problems across the state. While

addressing homeland security challenges is the driving force behind the center, traditional street crimes occur more frequently. The CFC constitutes part of the Massachusetts State Police (MSP), Division of Investigative Services, and employs state troopers and intelligence analysts. Committed staff members from the National Guard, Massachusetts Department of Corrections, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and Bureau of

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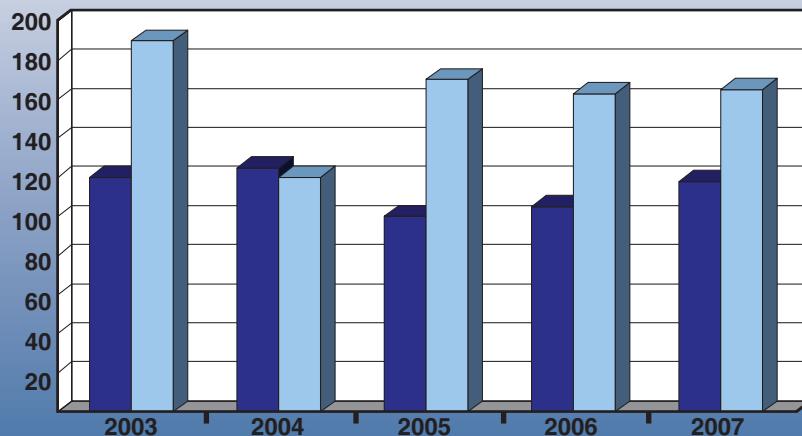
on drug control, interdiction, and narcotics intelligence.

### Targeting Violent Crime Initiative

As an all-crimes information-sharing and intelligence center, the CFC devotes a significant portion of its analytical resources to examining emerging crime trends. In this regard, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance, sponsored the Targeting Violent Crime Initiative, a grant program giving police agencies an incentive to use an ILP approach to address violence. The CFC, responding to a call from state policy makers to examine violent and, specifically, firearms crime throughout the state, proposed to develop a fusion process around weapons offenses.

This effort centers around answering questions about firearms in Massachusetts. First, where do guns used in crimes come from? In other words, do firearms used by criminals—many prohibited from legally owning guns—originate from traffickers bringing them into the state, individuals stealing them from businesses or homes, or other sources? Second, are the lesser-known illegal firearms markets in Springfield, Worcester, and Brockton the same as in Boston? Finally, what are the trends of firearms crime in various parts of the

### Aggravated Assault & Weapons Law Violations in Massachusetts By Male Juvenile Offenders



*U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance Targeting Violent Crimes Initiative: Intelligence-Led Policing - Firearms in MA*

*Source: Commonwealth Fusion Center Crime Reporting Unit  
National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)*

state? Is it on the rise in most large communities or do patterns vary? Which areas have the most stress from firearms crime? Answers to such broad questions can inform policy making.

#### ILP for Firearms Violence

Like many other states, Massachusetts has a number of public safety entities involved in violent crime reduction efforts. To this end, one objective of the CFC's DOJ-funded Intelligence-Led Policing for Firearms Violence project is to supplement, not duplicate, existing violent crime programs. Through the development of tactical and strategic intelligence products, the fusion center has sought to help these

public safety agencies arrive at informed, data-driven decisions.<sup>7</sup>

Working cooperatively with the U.S. Attorney's Office, Massachusetts State Police's firearms identification section and its crime laboratory, Boston Police Department, ATF, Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board, and other local police agencies, CFC began collecting, processing, and analyzing crime and weapons-trace data to provide policy makers with data on firearms crime patterns, the types of weapons recovered at crime scenes or during arrests, and the source cities and states of these guns.

This project also has focused on leveraging existing information and supplementing

it with new data to provide strategic and tactical intelligence to end users so that they can make informed decisions. The CFC serves as the state crime reporting repository using the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to collect crime information. This data provides details on crime incidents across jurisdictions on a year-to-year and month-to-month basis and offers specifics on types of crime, such as aggravated assaults by firearm type and offender age and gender. For instance, the NIBRS data set allowed the CFC to closely examine firearms offenses committed by youths aged 10 to 17 across various communities to study juvenile gun crime.

As another valuable source of information, the ATF's National Tracing Center collects and disseminates data on firearms recovered from crimes. Participating police departments submit a request to ATF, which traces the origins of the firearm through various databases and then provides information on the first retail purchaser, the licensed dealer that sold the firearm, and the type and manufacturer of the weapon. This trace data provides both tactical and strategic intelligence to investigators, patrol officers, intelligence analysts, and decision makers. For instance, identifying the city and state of

the first retail purchase of a firearm involved in a crime, as well as the amount of time elapsed between purchase and offense, provides a possible indicator of firearms trafficking.

In addition, the project has accessed summary data collected from the MSP crime laboratory and the state's criminal justice information system to track firearms patterns in the commonwealth. These sources provide information on the varieties of weapons, types of crimes, and patterns of ownership for guns used in offenses. Employing these data sources—rarely used for analysis prior to this—the project determined the number of firearms recovered at crimes and identified the weapons' journey to crime.

Fusing this criminal offense data with information on gun tracing, recovered firearms, and state weapon sales information provides investigators, police executives, and policy makers with a more comprehensive picture of firearms crimes in the state. Over the last year, the project has produced a number of intelligence briefs and analytical reports that outline gun violence by youth offenders or violent trends across communities.

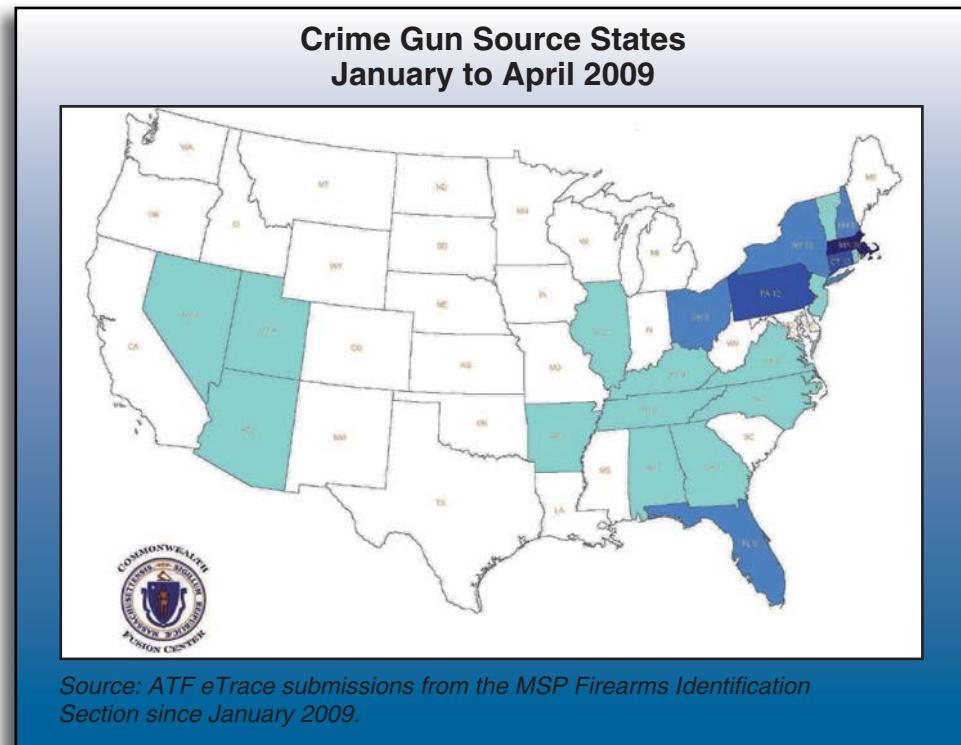
The CFC disseminates intelligence briefs, analyses, and crime maps to policy makers and police administrators across the state to assist with resource deployment and the design of best practices to address firearms crime. In addition, the fusion center feeds these products back to information collectors, such as investigators and patrol officers, to reinforce their information-gathering efforts. This creates buy-in from collectors and illustrates the need for high-quality, accurate data.

As the map indicates, this type of data illustrates the geographic journey to crime for guns used in crimes in Massachusetts. Rather than confirming

the common wisdom that only southern states fuel gun trafficking in Massachusetts, the project found that crime-related guns can originate from a number of states within the Northeast, the South, and beyond. This has important statewide implications for criminal justice policy.

## CONCLUSION

The fusion center concept involving various criminal justice agencies opens a number of possibilities for enhancing intelligence-led policing. It establishes relationships among federal, state, and local agencies, which leads to improved information sharing and access



to data that often was isolated in a single agency. It also brings together subject-matter expertise that provides a more relevant and credible intelligence end product. It creates buy-in from various agencies because they had input into its design.

This particular ILP project outlines a practical application of data fusion for traditional violent crime policy, easily transferable to homeland security and terrorism issues. Using existing and newly acquired data, fusion center analysts collect, process, analyze, and disseminate timely intelligence

to decision makers at the federal, state, and local levels. More knowledgeable operational, strategic, and tactical deployment choices can be made on the basis of these data-driven products. This initiative provides an example of how data fusion and fusion centers can assist in everyday law enforcement challenges.♦

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Bart Johnson, "A Look at Fusion Centers," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, December 2007, 28-32.

<sup>2</sup> David Carter, "The Law Enforcement Intelligence Function:

State, Local, and Tribal Agencies," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, June 2005, 1-9.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, *Fusion Center Guidelines: Developing and Sharing Information and Intelligence in a New Era* (Washington, DC: 2006).

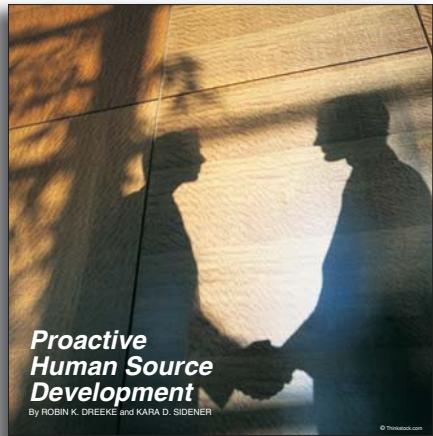
<sup>4</sup> *Fusion Center Guidelines*.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, *Navigating Your Agency's Path to Intelligence-Led Policing* (Washington, DC: 2009).

<sup>6</sup> *Navigating Your Agency's Path to Intelligence-Led Policing*.

<sup>7</sup> *Navigating Your Agency's Path to Intelligence-Led Policing*.

## Clarification



The editorial staff would like to make two clarifications pertaining to the article, "Proactive Human Source Development," which appeared in the November 2010 issue. First, the scenario provided in the article is a fictitious one. Second, when operating sources, investigators must remain aware of restrictions that may limit the types of information a particular source may offer. For example, sources employed by financial organizations are subject to the provisions of the Right to Financial Privacy Act; those working for educational institutions are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974; and sources within the health care and counseling professions are subject to a myriad of restrictions with respect to information they may share.

# Notable Speech



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## ***The Price of Freedom***

By Samuel L. Feemster, M.Div., J.D.

**J**oin with me in praise to our God for the gift of life and for the privilege of living in a free country. Ours is a nation where officers of the law can assemble on a Tuesday afternoon for contemplative reflections without fear of repercussion or persecution for failing to doff official uniforms before entering into sacred space sanctified for worship. We thank Chief Cook and Sheriff Lawhorne for exemplary leadership that empowers officers and deputies in the city of Alexandria to chart a present course illuminated by the wisdom of collective experiences and guided by the promises of undaunted hope. We also acknowledge the participation of state and local public officials who support the mission, vision, and core values of law

*Special Agent Feemster,  
an instructor in the  
Behavioral Science Unit  
at the FBI Academy,  
delivered this speech at the  
National Police Week  
Memorial Service for Law  
Enforcement Officers in  
Alexandria, Virginia,  
May 11, 2010.*



enforcement and pause with us for this memorial service.

The history of law enforcement in the city of Alexandria dates back to the late 18th century when the fundamental need to care for one another provided the basis for community. Then, the purpose of government was to promote the commonwealth, and the primacy of the common good prevailed. Acknowledging the interconnectedness of individuals who are reliant upon each other for survival, citizens passed laws to guard against disorder, deviance, and destruction. Citizens hired fellow citizens as night watchmen to enforce these laws. The efficiency of night watchmen gave way to around-the-clock policing. Correctly surmising this evolution, Sir Robert Peel said, “The police are the public, and the public are the police.”

Over a period spanning more than 200 years, the city of Alexandria has lost 17 citizens to death in the line of duty, 16 officers and 1 deputy. Without a doubt, these numbers reflect the increasing proficiency of recruitment programs, training curricula, and community support for a noble vocation where exposure to violent and predatory behavior is a constant threat. However, notwithstanding the collective best efforts of departments across our nation, our law enforcement family loses a member every 53 hours as a result of adversarial actions.

This week, our nation pays tribute to 127 citizens whose tour of duty as officers of the law exacted an awesome price. We who survive inherit the admonition to never forget the price of freedom

nor neglect our responsibility to ensure the welfare of the public servants who guard the privileges guaranteed by our freedom. Primary among our duties as protected citizens is to be ambassadors and advocates for the priority of officer wellness for all law enforcement personnel who voluntarily respond to the call to unselfishly serve the communities that comprise our nation.

While we are gathered in the safety of this sacred place for a few moments of reflection and challenge, members of our global family will be exposed to circumstances that require appropriate and immediate interventions of varying degrees and dynamics. These circumstances that interrupt the pursuits of life, liberty, and happiness arise out of the human condition that influences individual behaviors, both good and bad, and dictates national strategies of international implications. In light of our shared fallen humanity, members of our family are constantly expected to perform as ministers of reconciliation.

While we are here, some will be dispatched to talk with children and seniors about our rights and responsibilities as citizens. Some will be tasked to maintain order through tactical presence and patrols. Others will be dispatched to encounter and traverse the evil and extreme toxicity that inhabit the crimes and crime scenes of human predators. These welcome and unwelcome tasks are endured by citizens who accept the moral obligation to serve the public interest—citizens who answered the call to law enforcement because nothing else could fulfill them intrinsically.

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Some scholars suggest that in our society, the concept of calling rings with a decidedly spiritual chord. This perspective resonates in my spirit. The extended family God gave me also was populated with individuals whose calling card was a particular skill at which they were especially adapted. My grandfather was a very skillful livestock dresser and backyard butcher. His reputation for salvaging the “whole hog,” so to speak, resulted in a constant demand for his services.

Around our church, Aunt Alice was able to coax the most reserved child in our community to memorize and admirably perform a scripture recitation on Children’s Day. Everyone understood that she was born to nurture and encourage children.

Throughout the Ebenezer Association of Churches, Reverend Samuel L. Raper was known as an awesome builder of churches. He led five congregations to build and pay for edifices that included classrooms, administrative offices, and simple sanctuaries imbued with ethereal qualities. No one doubted that Reverend Raper was called to help disenfranchised congregations navigate the minefields of institutionalized socioeconomic discrimination.

Then, there was Mr. William Edwards: the shop teacher, Future Farmers of America advisor, and part-time auxiliary police officer who had no lawful authority but arrested the community through exemplary leadership and influence. Everyone in the community believed in Mr. Edwards.

At a very early age, it became apparent to me that certain people seemed called or especially equipped to perform tasks essential for the welfare of a community. Through exposure to Pastor Osborne Howell—a man who bought, bagged, and

delivered coal to impoverished citizens living in the slums of Cleveland County, North Carolina—a theology of “calling” began to take shape in my mind. The connection between the church and a pastoral call began to crystallize, but it was less clear whether God called livestock dressers and police officers.

More than a few incidents over the past 33 years redirected my course and modified my understanding of what it means to be fully engaged in a divinely ordained calling. Between law school and seminary, my weekly schedule included investigating and arresting individuals who disobeyed man’s laws and teaching and serving other individuals who professed obedience to God’s laws.

Matured by the experiences and exposures afforded by the complementary public services, it became clear to me that the equitable enforcement of just laws is an inherently spiritual vocation. Seasoned officers appreciate the distinction between the spirit of the law and the letter of the law. Likewise, confronting sectarian and civil injustice in the course of public service and private pursuits underscored the reality that adherence to ethics and sectarian religious practice does not make individuals nor their practice inherently spiritual. Conversely, the impartial enforcement of just laws is spirituality personified.

In view of these realities, it is my belief that special people are called into law enforcement: people who desire to serve the public interest and who embrace the motto of respect, responsibility, and results; people who appreciate that their vocation links them to fellow workers and a larger community; people who are able to embrace the



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transformative power of spiritual maturity. Given the nature of law enforcement and the character of individuals who are called to become officers of the law, it follows that law enforcement officers are ministers of reconciliation. 911 does not ring at the church, parish, synagogue, temple, or shrine. 911 rings at all local police departments. In every community across our nation, people hear in the sirens the harmony of help and hope, the promise of rescue and relief. Law enforcement officers are the ministers who meet the needs of friends and strangers in their darkest hours. They possess the unique ability to give or restrain liberty with equal compassion and dignity as circumstances dictate.

How shall we memorialize officers whose response to another citizen in crisis ended their tour of duty? Is it enough to pause 1 day a year for a few hours? Indeed, it is proper for us to look back and embrace the memories and memorials that we inherit. But, we also must look forward and envision a future where each passing year will witness fewer and fewer names added to the National Law Enforcement Memorial. Toward this end, our present embrace of best practices for training and equipping officers, based upon past experiences and future expectation, is arguably the proper way to remember those who were called to give their lives in the line of duty.

While we are gathered near our nation's capital to embrace and experience her expressions of gratitude during National Police Week, some of us present are suffering from unacknowledged and unresolved issues resulting from extant law enforcement practices and toxic

exposures, practices that may be exacerbated by the unrealistic expectation that we are, without multidimensional training and commensurate community resources, able to rise above the very human frailties that make our presence and service essential. It is my responsibility to remind us today that ministers of reconciliation, as hardy as we might be, sometimes need to be rescued, revived, redeemed, and restored.

**Given the nature of law enforcement and the character of individuals who are called to become officers of the law, it follows that law enforcement officers are ministers of reconciliation.**

officers must cultivate to pursue our profession at the highest levels of human potential. BeSTOW is designed to move officers beyond survival toward officer wellness through spirituality-oriented policing.

Sisters and brothers, citizens of Alexandria, we must take care of our own. The priority of officer wellness should be the signature of our memories and of our hopes.♦

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For additional information, see Samuel L. Feemster, "Spirituality: The DNA of Law Enforcement Practice," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, November 2007, 8-17; "Spirituality: An Invisible Weapon for Wounded Warriors," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, January 2009, 1-12; and "Wellness and Spirituality: Beyond Survival Practices for Wounded Warriors," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, May 2009, 2-8.

## Leadership 101

In my current assignment, I see talented people who frequently amaze me by their keen observations and insights concerning practical, effective law enforcement leadership models and principles. These individuals have been guided by their own operational experiences, as well as through the knowledge obtained by reading a multitude of books written by various "leadership gurus." However, after nearly 25 years of proudly serving in the law enforcement community, I have learned to look for three simple behaviors to distinguish a high-quality leader.

The first concerns putting subordinates first. As Ronald Reagan once said, "Putting people first has always been America's secret weapon...a spirit that drives us to dream and dare and take great risks for a greater good." Such leadership is exemplified by individuals who take their employees to a buffet lunch and then wait to eat after everyone has been through the line.

My second fundamental rule of leadership relates to the daily greetings of employees. A genuine leader will ask their officers a routine question, like "How are you?" Some individuals seemingly feel obligated to ask

the question, yet do not listen to the response. A true leader will actively listen with sincere interest in the answer. Such leaders' sincerity will be evident to their officers and reinforce their authentic concern for both the personal and professional lives of their people.

Finally, a real leader thanks their employees and gives legitimate praise to them when truly deserved. I can recall in my career working for many outstanding individuals who actually understood this simple concept. Instead of simply thanking everyone for something to make them all feel good, including comments,

such as "Thank you for coming to work today!" indisputable leaders understand that their role requires real praise and, sometimes, real criticism of their people.

Certainly, the review and incorporation of leadership doctrines and philosophies from a host of renowned authors will help further develop leadership skills. But, for me, the simple approach is the best. ♦

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*Special Agent Douglas B. Merel, an instructor in the FBI Leadership Development Unit at the FBI Academy, prepared this Leadership Spotlight.*

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## Fundamentals

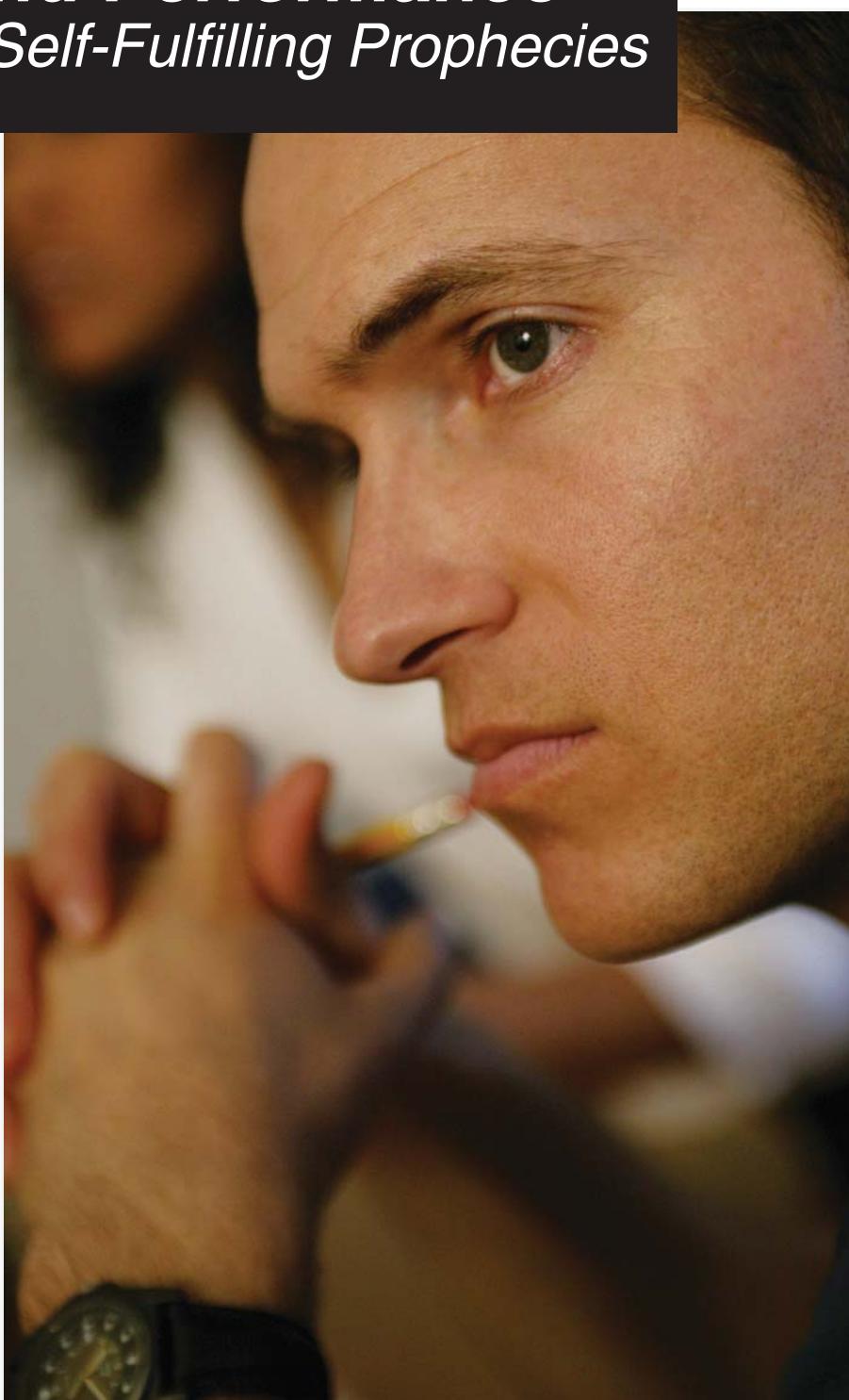
# Attitudes and Performance

## *The Impact of Self-Fulfilling Prophecies*

By Brian Fitch, Ph.D.

In recent years, the demands on law enforcement have become increasingly complex. Today, more than ever, officers must understand the law; grasp departmental policy; recognize ways to deal with a range of citizens, including difficult people and those with mental illnesses; demonstrate a mastery of tactics, such as weaponless defense, less lethal munitions, and firearms; and maintain the highest levels of physical fitness. Trainers play a critical role in the success of law enforcement's mission by identifying areas of improvement, setting goals, developing and implementing lesson plans, and providing oversight and motivation throughout the process. Yet, despite the best efforts of instructors—not to mention the considerable monies that agencies invest in training—many students have difficulty meeting certain mandates while others fail to realize their full potential as law enforcement professionals.

Student performance is—to say the least—a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon influenced by a number of factors, including the specificity and difficulty



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of course goals, instructional methods, facilitator experience, and learner expectations and level of dedication. In some instances, students fail because they lack the necessary aptitude or enthusiasm to learn something new. More often than not, however, it is because they have little faith in their own abilities or, in other cases, because of the teacher's attitude or conduct toward them. While most trainers recognize the importance of proper learning objectives and instructional methods, they often fail to realize the full impact that attitudes and beliefs—both those of the instructor and student—can have on motivation, effort, and learning.

To be successful—whether in the classroom, in the gym, or on the range—trainers need to set suitable goals, involve learners, and offer appropriate feedback. Students, on the other hand, must see value in pursuing those objectives, put forth the required effort, and believe unquestioningly in their ability to reach those goals. The author aims to familiarize law enforcement trainers with the importance of their attitudes and beliefs about students, as well as how they communicate those viewpoints—whether knowingly or unknowingly—to learners. Additionally, he discusses the role of student beliefs in determining how much effort they

are willing to exert, along with how they handle setbacks, and offers suggestions for improving student performance.

### **Pygmalion Effect**

According to ancient Greek mythology, Pygmalion, the King of Cyrus, carved a woman out of ivory so perfect that he fell in love with her. Through his own will and the assistance of the goddess Venus, he brought the statue to life—a phenomenon known as the Pygmalion effect.

In simplest terms, the Pygmalion effect represents a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy—a foretelling of a student's potential and performance brought about by a teacher's expectations. Hundreds of studies have

demonstrated that, on average, educators' assumptions do influence the actions and achievements of their pupils. If teachers anticipate that students will succeed, they usually do. On the other hand, when they expect learners to perform poorly, they often are not disappointed. In either case, pupils rise to the level of teacher expectations—either positive or negative.<sup>1</sup> Generally speaking, trainers who anticipate more from students by setting higher standards, providing encouragement, and offering positive feedback inspire higher levels of performance than those who lack faith in the ability and motivation of their charges.

While the earliest studies began with school-age children, subsequent research has

**“...the Pygmalion effect represents a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy—a foretelling of a student's potential and performance brought about by a teacher's expectations.”**



*Dr. Fitch, a lieutenant with the Los Angeles, California, Sheriff's Department, holds faculty positions in the Psychology Department at California State University, Long Beach, and with the Organizational Leadership Program at Woodbury University.*

examined the role of instructor suppositions with salespeople, athletes, pilots, law enforcement officers, and military personnel.<sup>2</sup> Nor are the results of these investigations incidental. For example, in a study involving 105 Israeli Defense Force soldiers attending a 15-week combat command course, the expectations of the instructors accounted for 73 percent of the variance in performance, 66 percent of the variance in attitudes, and 28 percent of the variance in leadership. Prior to meeting the trainees, the instructors received data on the students, including psychological test scores and ratings from their previous trainers. They also had to learn each trainee's command potential (CP) rating. The results caused the study's authors to conclude that "Trainees whose instructors were led to expect more did indeed learn more."<sup>3</sup>

The Pygmalion effect can easily apply to law enforcement trainers in every corner of the profession. As most learners can testify from experience, teachers' influence goes well beyond the material or classroom. Instructors play a critical role in shaping how students see themselves, their abilities, and their potential in virtually every area of law enforcement training—as well as whether they strive to reach that potential or decide,

instead, to give up because they simply do not "have what it takes."

During the basic police academy, trainees must perform a number of tasks, such as shooting, driving, and defensive tactics, approaching these with varying degrees of belief in their abilities due, in part, to prior knowledge. While some may have had extensive experience with firearms, high-speed driving, or weaponless defense,

***The way educators communicate their beliefs and attitudes can influence how students think about themselves, their potential, and their abilities.***

others have had little, if any, exposure. In such situations, students look to their instructors for guidance and reassurance. What the trainers feel and believe and how they communicate those ideas to students have tremendous power and, like most power, can be constructive or destructive depending on how it is used.<sup>4</sup>

Trainees learning the basics of operating a handgun for the first time undoubtedly will experience a degree of uncertainty. But, by demonstrating a positive attitude toward their abilities, providing positive feedback, and setting high goals, the instructor likely can enhance their confidence, thereby motivating them to continue exerting maximum effort. On the other hand, if the trainer shows little interest in the students, communicating instead a lack of faith in their abilities, they may stop putting forth the effort necessary to improve, effectively short-circuiting the learning process.

#### **Teacher Expectations**

The way educators communicate their beliefs and attitudes can influence how students think about themselves, their potential, and their abilities. Instructors treat learners—whether knowingly or unknowingly—differently according to preconceived beliefs about what these individuals are—or are not—capable of accomplishing. In each of the studies the author reviewed, teacher expectations had a pronounced effect on student achievement. When teachers believed that students were smart, they treated them as if they were; the students must have thought they were smart, and—not surprisingly—they

acted as though they were. In contrast, when teachers felt that students did not have the necessary skills, aptitudes, or intelligence to perform well, they treated them accordingly. The students apparently believed they did not "have what it takes" and behaved in ways consistent with those expectations.

While the importance of instructor expectations seems straightforward enough, the ways educators communicate their beliefs can prove more subtle. Studies in communication and psychology have suggested that people rely on three channels to convey their emotions.

1. Verbal (words and phrases)
2. Paralanguage (tone, pitch, and volume)
3. Nonverbal (facial expressions, eye contact, hand gestures, posture, and distance)

What is surprising, however, is the relatively minor role played by the spoken word in communicating emotion. In fact, communication studies have indicated that the majority of emotions, including how instructors truly feel about a student's performance and potential, are communicated nonverbally. More specifically, fully 55 percent of the emotional impact of a communicator's message is nonverbal, with 38 percent

accounted for by paralanguage and only 7 percent explained by spoken words.<sup>5</sup>

The apparent power of nonverbal communication reinforces the importance of sending consistent messages. When instructors say one thing but broadcast a different message nonverbally, they invariably undermine the credibility of their communication. For example, law enforcement firearms trainers can significantly undermine their effectiveness by telling students that anyone can shoot well while, at the same time, displaying subtle cues of frustration, such as exhaling deeply, looking disgusted, or speaking in a patronizing voice to recruits having trouble attaining a qualifying score.

Students, however, are surprisingly adept at picking up nonverbal cues, such as subtle changes in facial expression, eye contact, posture, or tone of voice.<sup>6</sup> If instructors send mixed messages, learners invariably will pay greater attention to the nonverbal one, especially if it is negative. Thus, when praising students, trainers must communicate the same message both verbally and nonverbally to be believed.

### **Self-Efficacy Beliefs**

Subjective beliefs about personal ability—commonly referred to as self-efficacy—can influence the amount of effort a learner commits to a goal. Research on self-efficacy has suggested that students'



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motivation to strive for particular goals is closely linked to what they believe about their abilities to reach them.<sup>7</sup> Or, put another way, students do not normally set goals unless they believe they can achieve them. Their self-efficacy not only influences the type and difficulty of the goals they select but also helps determine the amount of effort they will expend.

Because students with high levels of self-efficacy have confidence in their abilities to meet their goals, they tend to set higher expectations and demonstrate greater effort than pupils with lower levels of self-efficacy. In contrast, learners less convinced of their abilities to produce an outcome or meet a goal—those with lower levels of self-efficacy—set lower objectives and exert reduced effort.<sup>8</sup> And, as should be clear by now, the way trainers communicate and interact with learners impacts their self-efficacy. Greater instructor expectations translate to higher levels of self-efficacy that can result in more effort and superior levels of performance.

Self-efficacy not only affects the amount of effort learners will exert to master a particular task but also the way they deal with the inevitable setbacks that come with learning something new. Most students experience some level of frustration, and the way they

handle those delays can mean the difference between success and failure. People vary in their self-efficacy expectations from strong to weak. Learners with a solid sense of self-efficacy believe they can master difficulties through hard work and diligence, making them more likely to succeed than others who feel that they have little control over an outcome.

“

***Because students with high levels of self-efficacy have confidence in their abilities to meet their goals, they tend to set higher expectations and demonstrate greater effort....***

”

### **Locus of Control**

Even in situations where students demonstrate high levels of self-efficacy, their motivation to pursue a goal often depends heavily on the perceived relationship between effort and outcome—a concept known as locus of control.<sup>9</sup> People with an internal locus of control believe they have power over their own destiny. They tend to feel that their lives are shaped by their

own skills, abilities, and efforts. In contrast, individuals with an external locus of control often think that their lives are determined mostly by sources outside themselves—in other words, chance or luck.

Students with a strong internal locus of control tend to react differently to setbacks than those with an external sense of control. For example, when students with an internal locus of control do poorly on a test, they likely attribute this dismal achievement to a lack of preparation or failure to read the questions properly. Such learners likely believe that with more attention to these areas, they can improve their performance on subsequent examinations. On the other hand, students with a strong external locus of control generally attribute their lackluster performance to bad luck or difficult material, often surrendering to the belief that they do not “have what it takes.”

Few learners are likely to pursue an objective—regardless of how attractive or important the outcome—if they believe their efforts will have little effect.<sup>10</sup> In other words, students are not going to waste their time and energy pursuing aims over which they have little perceived control. On the other hand, if learners believe that their efforts will have a direct impact on an important performance objective, they likely will pursue it



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with all of the effort necessary to achieve the goal.

In basic police training, recruits, especially those with little previous exposure, can become easily frustrated when faced with the many unfamiliar skills they must learn. This is especially true of students with a strong external locus of control who simply surrender to the idea that the ability to perform any number of law enforcement functions, such as high-speed driving, defensive tactics, and report writing, is innate and, therefore, not subject to change. Thus, law enforcement trainers should stress the importance of effort as opposed to talent. For instance, they should encourage trainees having trouble qualifying with a handgun to practice repeatedly and continue until their skills improve. Students should realize that no limit exists for the amount of time and effort they can spend practicing. And, more often

than not, that improvement directly reflects the amount of time and effort spent practicing. By emphasizing hard work and celebrating successes, instructors can help improve the self-efficacy, confidence, and performance of their students.

### Mind-Set

Closely related to locus of control, mind-set is the theory that some students reach their potential and others do not because of different personal beliefs about ability and intelligence. The key, it seems, is not ability, but, rather, how students *look at* ability. Do learners see ability as fixed (something that cannot be changed or improved), or do they view it as something that can be developed? Students with a fixed mind-set believe that certain attributes (e.g., talent, intelligence, or athletic ability) cannot be changed; people are simply born with their full potential in place.<sup>11</sup> What is the

point of working hard unless that effort will pay off? Because a challenge is, by definition, hard work, learners with a fixed mind-set often avoid adversity in favor of what they know, effectively limiting their potential and perpetuating their negative self-image.

In contrast, learners with a growth mind-set believe that they can develop and improve skills through hard work and training. As a result, students with a growth mind-set tend to embrace new challenges and set higher goals.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, rather than being discouraged by failure, such students generally look at setbacks as opportunities to develop and, in many cases, as predictable aspects of the learning process. This desire to improve creates a positive feedback loop that encourages further learning and improvement, which promotes yet more desire to learn.

The view students take of their abilities can profoundly

affect their success and personal growth in any number of training venues, as well as other important areas of life. Fortunately, learners can change from a fixed to a growth mind-set. Regardless of the topic, law enforcement instructors should pay special attention to the attitudes of their students. Whether conducting a course on interviewing, crime scene investigation, or basic firearms, trainers should emphasize how improvement in all areas of law enforcement is the result of appropriate goal setting, hard work, and learning from failure.

Instructors can help learners better realize their potential by emphasizing a growth mind-set—more specifically, the idea that intelligence and performance are malleable and that both can be improved with enough hard work and practice. They can enhance students' self-confidence, desire to learn, and resilience. When doing so, however, instructors need to work with students to set appropriate goals. Studies have suggested that early success and familiarity are important parts of building learners' confidence and, in turn, their ability to overcome obstacles.<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

While traditional instructor development classes have focused on clear course objectives, cohesive lesson plans, and

active learning, they often have not adequately emphasized the important relationship between beliefs and attitudes—both of the trainer and student—in motivation, effort, and learning. Empirical studies, however, seem to support a link between instructor attitudes and beliefs about learners and student performance. Teachers who believe in their students expect higher levels of performance

***...mind-set is the theory that some students reach their potential and others do not because of different personal beliefs about ability and intelligence.***

and set more challenging goals, which enhance learners' beliefs in their abilities—an attitude that, in turn, generates greater effort and higher levels of achievement.

Similarly, strong evidence has suggested that the ways students think about their abilities and potential—specifically self-efficacy and mind-set—can have a compelling effect on motivation, effort, and performance. Students with a strong

sense of self-efficacy and a growth mind-set—in other words, learners who believe strongly in their abilities to accomplish goals through hard work and practice—tend to outperform students with lower levels of self-efficacy and a fixed mind-set. Fortunately, neither self-efficacy nor mind-set is fixed. By setting suitable goals, encouraging early successes, and providing positive, timely feedback, instructors can help students improve their self-efficacy and mind-set and, by doing so, ultimately enhance their self-confidence, ability to handle setbacks, and performance.♦

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For further discussion, see Robert A. Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, *Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectations and Pupils' Intellectual Development* (New York, NY: Rinehart and Winston, 1968).

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<sup>4</sup> For further discussion on the relationship between self-fulfilling prophecy and achievement, see Dov Eden, *Pygmalion in Management: Productivity as a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990).

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<sup>9</sup> For a complete discussion on locus of control, see Julian B. Rotter, *Social Learning and Clinical Psychology* (New York, NY: Prentice Hill, 1954).

<sup>10</sup> For more on the relationship between expectancy and effort, see Victor H. Vroom, *Work and Motivation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1997).

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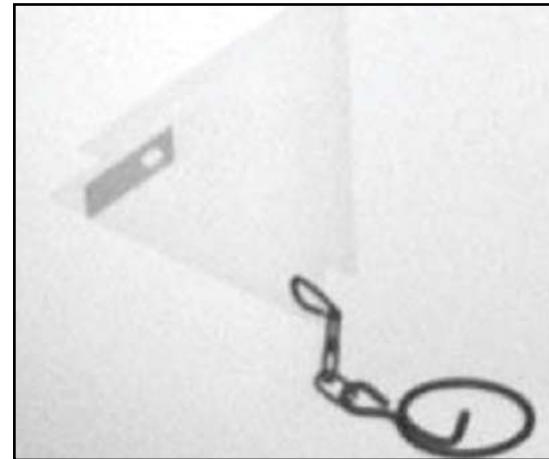
<sup>13</sup> For a discussion on control, see Ellen J. Langer, "The Illusion of Control," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 32, no. 2 (1975): 311-328.

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## Unusual Weapon

### Keychain Razor

This keychain razor may be used by offenders and poses a serious threat to law enforcement officers. The device has a plastic handle with a metal blade, which retracts into the housing. This unusual weapon may be able to pass through a magnetometer.



# Focus on Training



## ***The Practice of Spirituality and Emotional Wellness in Law Enforcement***

By Dan S. Willis

*“ Officers need to understand and sense the noble purpose and meaning of police work; a vocation of selfless service, compassion, and doing good for others. ”*

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**T**he true meaning of the essence of practicing spirituality and emotional wellness in law enforcement came to me while attending the FBI National Academy.<sup>1</sup> One course—Spirituality, Wellness, and Vitality Issues in Law Enforcement Practices—demonstrated to me that every person is comprised of a mind, body, and spirit. And, it is the wellness and vitality of spirit that most dramatically can affect our minds, bodies, and quality of service that we as law enforcement professionals provide.<sup>2</sup>

### **Understanding the Need**

For me, spirituality in law enforcement can be defined as a compelling inner sense of purpose and

meaning toward selfless service to others, along with a deep connection to individuals and the community served. It involves the ethical practice of a nurturing and compassionate spirit, selfless service, integrity, and human dignity. The spirituality of the law enforcement profession is evident in every aspect of protecting our communities and helping others in a dignified manner. Without the consistent practice of this spiritual component, law enforcement can become ineffective, thereby alienating those who need us the most.

Those who perceive law enforcement as a calling feel this spiritual purpose and connectedness, which often can lead to officers inadvertently sacrificing their emotional well-being through their

dedicated service. The essence of police work is to do good and to serve while combating the evil that confronts officers daily. The toxic effects of being immersed within the dark nature of society has a tendency to drain the spirit and life from officers, leaving them emotionally ill and susceptible to burn out, depression, bitterness, ineffective service, suicidal thoughts, and a sense of hopelessness. We need to change the culture of law enforcement that has historically ignored the long-term emotional scars the job can leave on our souls. We need to train officers how to effectively process the pain, evil, and suffering they repeatedly face while nurturing their spirit of service, compassion, and purpose.

Police supervisors and command staffs must cultivate discussions, training, and resources to tap into the well-spring of spirit within officers to keep them centered and connected to the true purpose and essential spirit of police work. The emotional well-being of officers is paramount to their providing the highest quality of service consistently. The health and vitality of a community depends upon the emotional wellness and spiritual connectedness to service that each officer possesses. As officers are trained to learn how to nurture and maintain their inner spirit of compassion, noble service, and connectedness, they are much more likely to be able to develop that sense of inner calling and meaningful purpose in the quality of their work.

The law enforcement profession often overlooks the humanness of its members. It is the officers' spirits that make them human. The cumulative effect of confronting evil for years often has a detrimental effect upon all aspects of an officer's

spirit and can lead to tragic consequences for both officers and the communities they protect and serve. A community cannot be healthy if individual officers are suffering from a damaged spirit.

Every phone conversation and contact an officer has with the public provides an opportunity to practice the spirituality of law enforcement through compassion, respect, and connectedness with the humanness of the other person. Each contact can serve to promote the good image of the department while potentially serving to enrich the emotional well-being and fulfillment of the officer, *if* that officer has been trained in interpersonal communication, the art of meaningful service, and the practice of spiritual connectedness.

#### **Filling the Void**

Traditional law enforcement academy and in-service training focus almost exclusively on the mind and body with little, if any, training and development of the most vital component of people, their spirit. The soul and character of officers—how they learn to process suffering, emotional pain, and evil—all determine their effectiveness in the profession, as well as the quality of their lives and careers.

Command staff and supervisors can proactively work to ensure the spiritual and emotional well-being of their officers in several ways. Initially, the police culture needs to be changed through periodic discussions within staff and among officers about the practice of spirituality and emotional wellness in law enforcement. Officers need to understand and sense the noble purpose and meaning of police work: a vocation of selfless service, compassion, and doing good for others. They need

**The spirituality of the law enforcement profession is evident in every aspect of protecting our communities and helping others in a dignified manner.**

to comprehend the spiritual connectedness to their own inner sense of duty and purpose with that of the needs of their fellow officers and the community they serve.

Emotional wellness issues should become an integral part of the police academy curriculum, as well as field training and in-service programs. Discussions should take place about how to train officers to not personalize the pain, suffering, and emotional trauma that they encounter repeatedly on a daily basis.

Officers must receive training in how to emotionally renew themselves and find fulfillment in their work to remain healthy in mind, body, and spirit. Through periodic department training—as well as the use of peer support personnel, chaplains, or confidential counselors—officers need to learn how to constructively deal with the corrosive effects of the job so these do not accumulate to the point of significantly altering their outlook and quality of service. Agencies also can provide online resources, such as an anonymous emotional wellness blog or a department chat room where officers can discuss concerns and explore training objectives.

In addition, departments should offer training to teach officers ways of searching their own spirit to self-evaluate and discover effective methods to insulate themselves from the toxic effects of the profession. Such training could focus on the officers either discussing with their peers or evaluating themselves on such issues as the following:

- How do you deal with loss, pain, or suffering?
- In what ways do you release stress?
- What are your important relationships, and what makes them important?

- Where have you found comfort?
- How do you deal with anger, frustration, ingratitude, and personal affronts?
- What gives you hope?
- What do you enjoy?
- What provides you with a sense of purpose and meaning in your life?
- What does the community need from you?
- What does the organization and your fellow officers need from you?

Finally, agencies should provide ongoing interpersonal communication skills training to develop officers' abilities to listen effectively and to communicate, connect, express themselves, and relate well with the public, as well as their peers and supervisors. Officers should meet with a peer support counselor, chaplain, or other confidential department support person once a year at the time of their annual evaluation to promote discussions about emotional wellness and those issues most critical to nurturing their spirit of service.

**“ We need to change the culture of law enforcement that has historically ignored the long-term emotional scars the job can leave on our souls. ”**

## Conclusion

The practice of spirituality and emotional wellness training in law enforcement is vital to ensure that the highest quality of service is being consistently provided to the community. An officer with a damaged spirit cannot serve the public and is in danger of self-destructing. It is in everyone's best interest—the department, the officer, and the community—for officers to receive training and resources to learn how to most effectively practice spirituality in their service to keep them emotionally well.

The compassionate, noble spirit of service within officers compelling them to selflessly serve and protect the community needs to be consistently recognized, nurtured, and developed to maintain their vitality and passion of service throughout their careers and beyond. Because the safety of our nation depends on these valiant, dedicated professionals, we must ensure that they remain healthy and vibrant human beings.♦

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The FBI hosts four 10-week National Academy sessions each year during which law enforcement executives from around the

world come together to attend classes in various criminal justice subjects.

<sup>2</sup> For additional information, see Samuel L. Feemster, "Spirituality: The DNA of Law Enforcement Practice," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, November 2007, 8-17; "Spirituality: An Invisible Weapon for Wounded Warriors," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, January 2009, 1-12; and "Wellness and Spirituality: Beyond Survival Practices for Wounded Warriors," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, May 2009, 1-8.

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**Length:** Manuscripts should contain 2,000 to 3,500 words (8 to 14 pages, double-spaced) for feature articles and 1,200 to 2,000 words (5 to 8 pages, double-spaced) for specialized departments, such as Police Practice.

**Format:** Authors should submit three copies of their articles typed and double-spaced on 8 ½- by 11-inch white paper with all pages numbered, along with an electronic version saved on computer disk, or e-mail them.

**Criteria:** The *Bulletin* judges articles on relevance to the audience, factual accuracy, analysis of the information, structure and logical flow, style and ease of reading, and length. It generally does not publish articles on similar topics within a 12-month period or accept those previously published or currently under

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# Bulletin Report

## The Day Fine

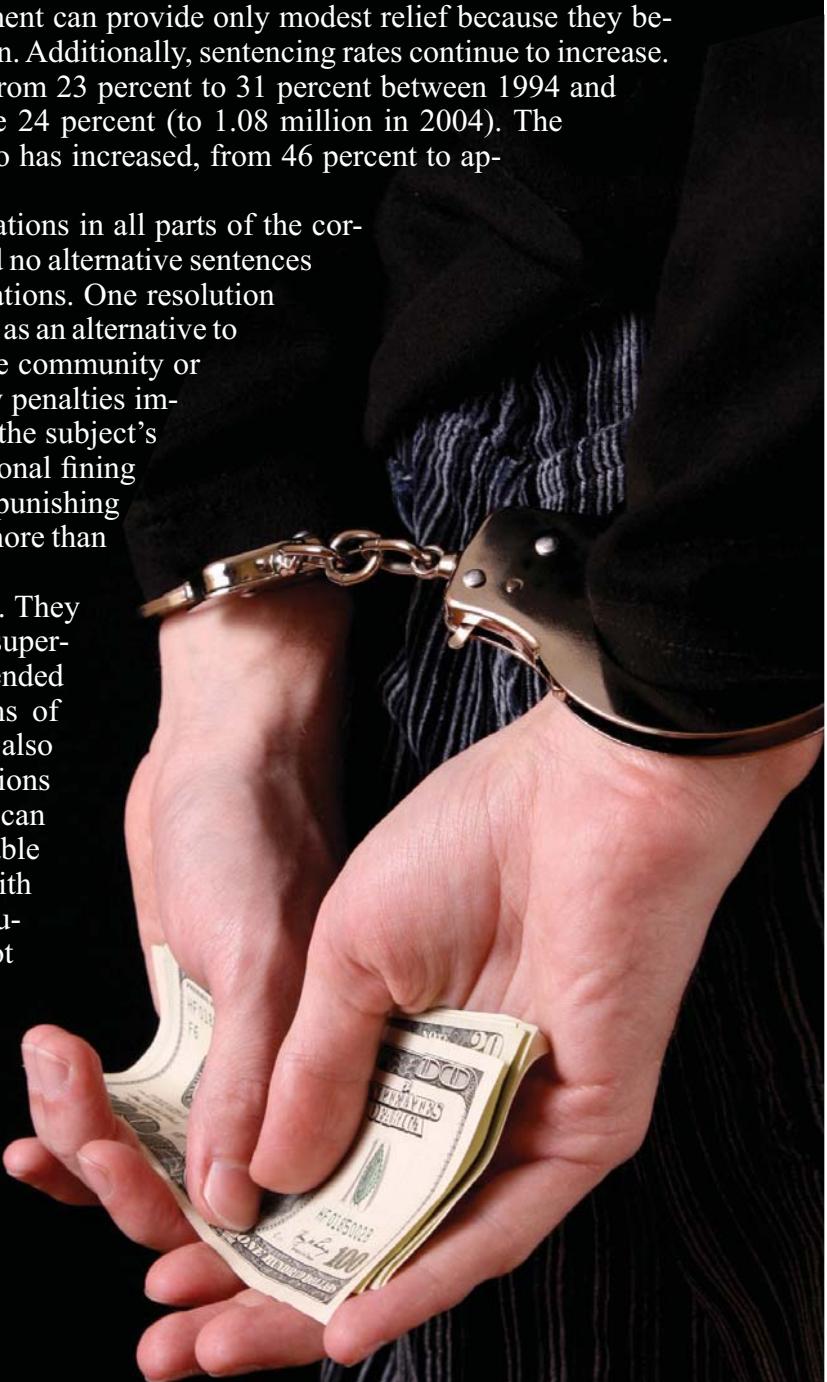
The National Institute of Justice has produced *Alternatives to Custodial Supervision: The Day Fine*. Corrections populations in the United States have risen at alarming rates. From 1990 to 2007, probation populations rose 61 percent, with 4.3 million individuals on probation. Parole populations have increased 55 percent to a level of 824,000 persons. Incarceration sentences have expanded by even greater amounts—jail populations rose 93 percent (to 780,000), and prison populations increased 311 percent (to 2.3 million inmates) over the same interval. More than 7.2 million people are under correctional supervision today.

Releasing “low risk” offenders from confinement can provide only modest relief because they become parolees and remain under justice supervision. Additionally, sentencing rates continue to increase. Felony conviction rates for violent crimes grew from 23 percent to 31 percent between 1994 and 2004, and the volume of convictions overall rose 24 percent (to 1.08 million in 2004). The percentage of time served for violent felonies also has increased, from 46 percent to approximately 66 percent.

Policy makers now are facing growing populations in all parts of the corrections system with no trend reversals in sight and no alternative sentences capable of significantly reducing custodial populations. One resolution being examined is introducing and expanding fines as an alternative to sanctions requiring direct supervision either in the community or an institution. Specifically, day fines are monetary penalties imposed on an offender that take into consideration the subject’s financial means. They are an outgrowth of traditional fining systems, which were seen as disproportionately punishing offenders with modest means while imposing no more than slaps on the wrist for well-to-do offenders.

Day fines have numerous system applications. They can be used in lieu of prison, jail, and community supervision. When employed in conjunction with suspended sentences, day fines approach probation in terms of leverage against subsequent offending. Day fines also can be used in lieu of probation and parole revocations and combined with any custodial sanction. Judges can provide revocation options similar to those available for probation simply by combining day fines with suspended sentences. The difference is that no supervision costs are incurred, and offenders are not sent back to jail or prison for technical violations.

The complete report (NCJ 230401), written by Edwin W. Zedlewski, is available at the National Criminal Justice Reference Service’s Web site, <http://www.ncjrs.gov>.



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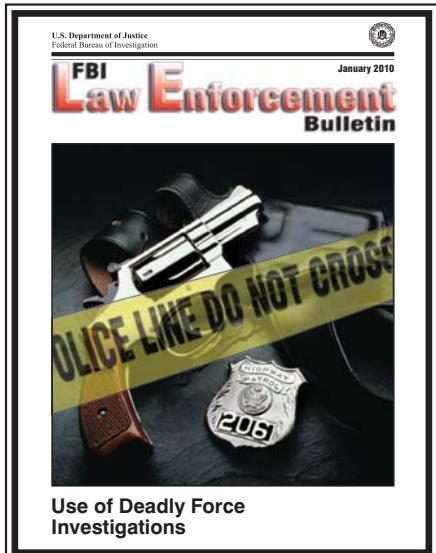
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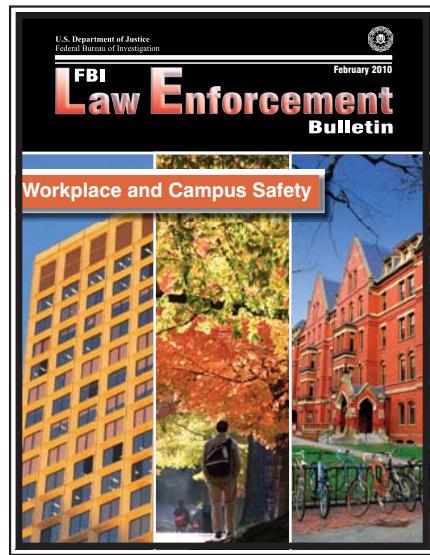


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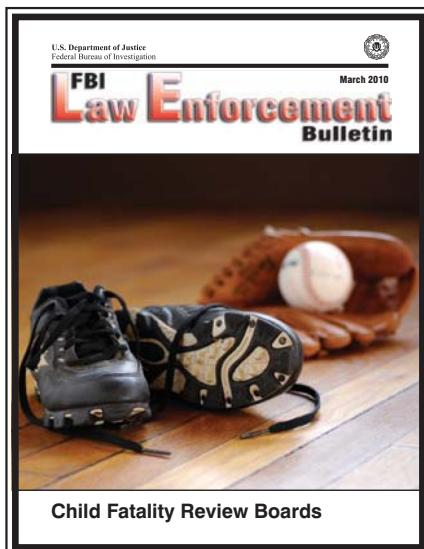
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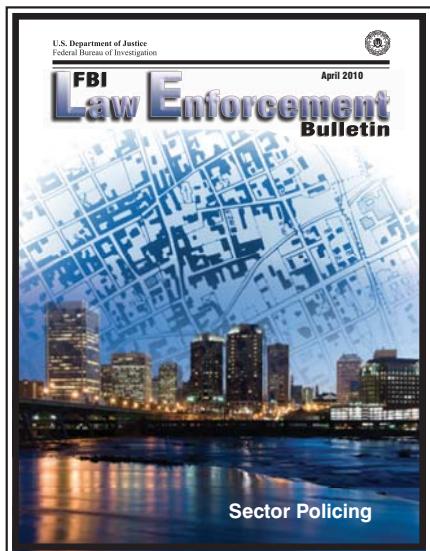
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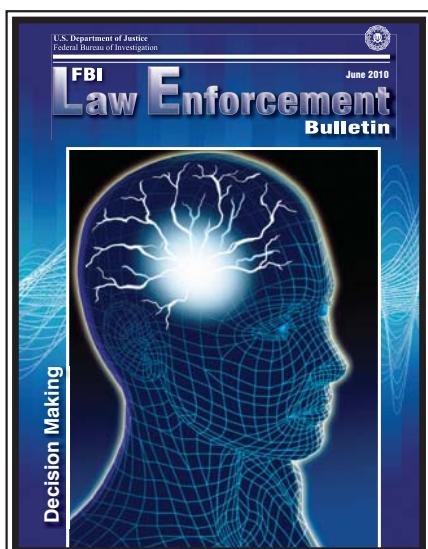
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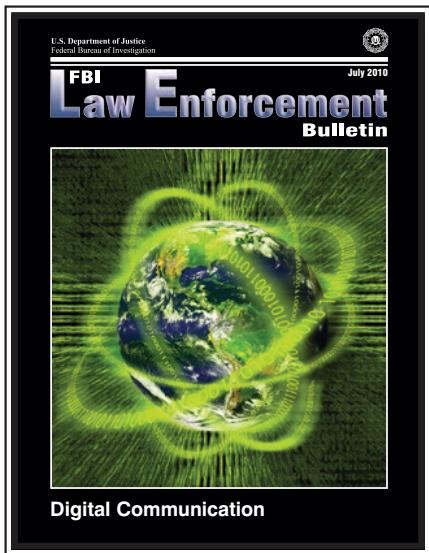
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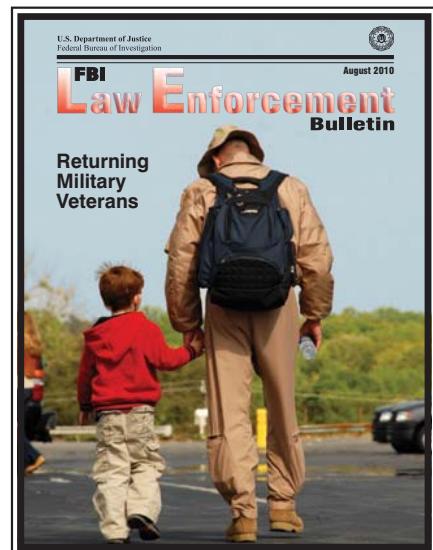
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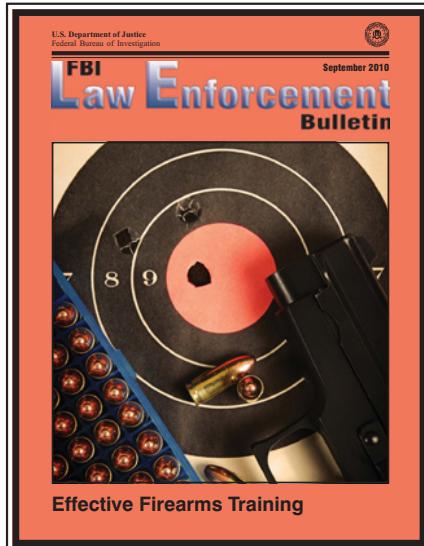
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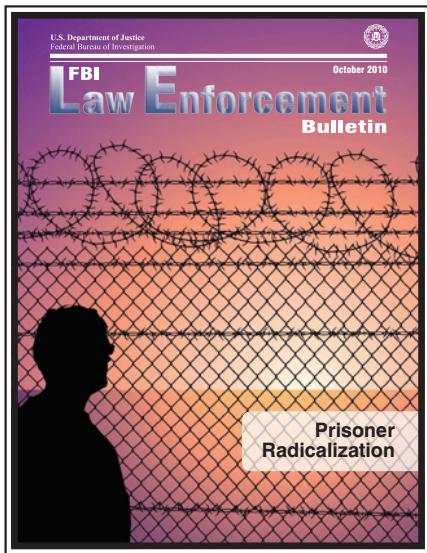
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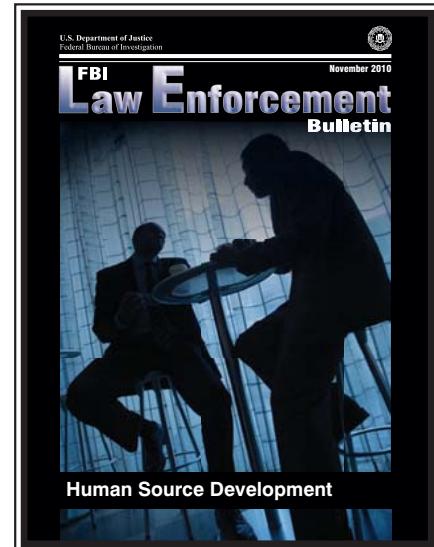
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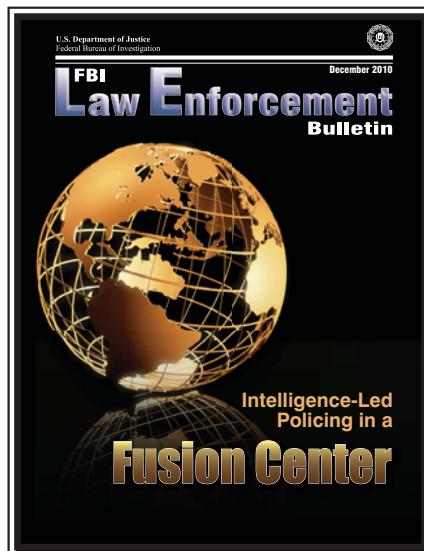
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## Bulletin Notes

Law enforcement officers are challenged daily in the performance of their duties; they face each challenge freely and unselfishly while answering the call to duty. In certain instances, their actions warrant special attention from their respective departments. The *Bulletin* also wants to recognize those situations that transcend the normal rigors of the law enforcement profession.



Deputy Watson



Officer Farley



Officer Kokernak

While traveling between facilities for training, Deputy Brett Watson and Detention Officers Marcus Farley and Matthew Kokernak of the Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Sheriff's Office, along with officers from other agencies, came upon an accident on a very busy highway. Officer Kokernak drove his car around the traffic to provide assistance. Upon arrival,

the officers found a motorcyclist, who was not breathing and did not have a pulse, lying in the road. Officers Farley and Kokernak stopped and diverted all traffic away from the victim. This allowed Deputy Watson, also a medic, and other officers to render assistance to the individual. After employing CPR and using an AED, the victim's pulse returned before emergency officials arrived, who were able to quickly get into position. The victim then was transported to the hospital.



Officer Fitzgerald

the victims later stated to a local newspaper that Officer Fitzgerald "may very well have saved our lives."

A house fire nearly cut short the holiday season of one family in Fairfield Glade, Tennessee. On that night, Fairfield Glade Police Department Public Safety Officer Jeff Fitzgerald responded to an emergency call for the fire; he arrived first to the scene and witnessed the front of the residence fully engulfed in flames, unbeknownst to the family of three (including a 4-month-old infant) sleeping inside. Officer Fitzgerald entered the blazing house from the rear, woke the parents and child, and transported them to safety. He then brought them to his police car to keep warm until further assistance arrived. One of

Nominations for the **Bulletin Notes** should be based on either the rescue of one or more citizens or arrest(s) made at unusual risk to an officer's safety. Submissions should include a short write-up (maximum of 250 words), a separate photograph of each nominee, and a letter from the department's ranking officer endorsing the nomination. Submissions can be mailed to the Editor, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, FBI Academy, Outreach and Communications Unit, Quantico, VA 22135 or e-mailed to [leb@fbiacademy.edu](mailto:leb@fbiacademy.edu).

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## ***Patch Call***



The Starkville, Mississippi, Police Department's patch displays symbols of both United States and state pride. The top image, a bald eagle, recognizes patriotism and courage. The magnolia, Mississippi's state flower, is depicted in full bloom, encircled by double yellow lines that represent the department's personnel. Finally, the United States and Mississippi flags surround the magnolia to pay homage to the nation and state the department serves.



Nevada's official nickname, the "Silver State," and its unofficial nicknames the "Battle Born State" and the "Sagebrush State" are on the patch of the Mineral County, Nevada, Sheriff's Office. The central emblem contains the sagebrush, the state flower, on the bottom half, and the famous landmark Mt. Grant on the top; a silver circle encases the emblem, which honors Nevada's rich history with silver mining. The words "Battle Born" at the top recall Nevada's entry into statehood during the Civil War.